



2007 RHODE ISLAND SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) PROGRAM INFORMATION AND APPLICATION GUIDE

The applicant is strongly advised to read the complete Application Packet including this Application Guide before working on the application. The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) federal program is not a typical infrastructure program. The best way to prepare is to read through the **National Center for Safe Routes to School** website at:

<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org>

Click on "Getting Started" on the left side of the opening page and after reading the page go to the SRTS online guide. The guide alone has over 175 pages of ideas and direct assistance in formulating your SRTS program. Also follow links to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Safe Routes to Schools: Practice and Promise, and Safe Routes to School Toolkit. The SRTS website is a great source of information with a wealth of ideas and technical information. See <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/srtsguidance.htm> for complete federal guidelines.

This Guide follows the format of the Rhode Island SRTS application and gives specific instructions to assist applicants in completing it. You can download the application form from the Rhode Island SRTS website listed below:

<http://www.planning.ri.gov/transportation/default.htm>

When working on an Adobe version of this application, you may type, "see attached" and submit responses to those sections as attachments. When filling out a Word version which is also available on the Statewide Planning website, you may enlarge the space allocated as necessary. Completed applications should include the SRTS Application Form, the Engineering Data Sheet (infrastructure projects only), the Walkability Checklist, the SRTS Student Arrival and Departure Tally and Parent survey (optional) and appropriate maps and photographs where applicable.

If you have any questions or would like an electronic or hard copy mailed, please contact Ronnie Sirota, the Rhode Island Safe Routes to School State Coordinator at 401-222-1233 or at www.rsirota@doa.state.ri.us Submittals must include one original signed application and eight hard copies no later than **4:00 p.m. July 12, 2007**.

RI Statewide Planning
Att'n. Ronnie Sirota, Senior Planner
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

A. Applicant(s): The SRTS program is geared towards including nontraditional partners. Many times a project will be grassroots driven, and project sponsors will include schools or community based groups in addition to the more typical governmental groups. The application should identify the entity or entities responsible for developing and carrying out the SRTS Program that is the subject of the application. The Program is school-focused; applications should identify a school or schools that will be the focus of the program.

- An applicant can be a school(s), school district, state agency, city or town, or a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. A private school can apply if it is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. If the applicant is a non-profit, **the application must be in partnership with a school or a city or town and be part of a comprehensive program for a particular school.** For example, a non-profit, state agency, etc. can formulate an appropriate non-infrastructure program and offer it to school(s) applying as part of their budget or at no cost. An example of this would be a local police department in partnership with a school offering a program with that school as part of the comprehensive program. The police department is, of course, an entity of the city or town. This must be a true partnership (see later instructions on forming teams for the applicant school); planning and implementation should be done with the school and other members of the “team”. Because the **Principal of the school**, the **Superintendent of Schools** or equivalent if it is a private school, and the **Chief Executive of the city/town(s)** in which the program is located **must** sign the signature page on the end of this application form, representatives of the three entities should all be part of the “team”.
- ***It is anticipated that most applications will be for a single school.*** Only elementary and middle schools (grades K – 8) are eligible. In some cases, two schools, i.e., a middle school and an elementary school, may be located very close together and may submit a single application.
- On the application form, please list the co-applicants. To illustrate the above, applicants can be “Johnny Appleseed” Elementary School in partnership with the Town of “Lake Park”. Another example is “non-profit (School PTO, etc.)” in partnership with the “Johnny Appleseed” Elementary School and the Town of “Lake Park”. The specific School and the Town are always listed as two of the applicants.

B. Contact: As explained above, there may be more than one applicant organization listed. However, the application should list one person as the contact for all communications and inquiries relative to the application.

II. PROJECT SUMMARY

A. Project Title: The title in most cases should reflect the comprehensive program that you are developing for your school where appropriate. Include the school(s) in the title, such as the “Johnny Appleseed” Elementary School SRTS Program”. The title, may, but does not have to, reflect specific infrastructure improvement(s) being applied for, since the goal is the development of a comprehensive, multi-faceted program.

B. Project Type: Eligible activities include projects that directly support increased safety, convenience and usage for elementary and middle school children to bicycle and/or walk to school. Projects must be within a 2-mile radius of the school. There are three categories of activities or project elements that you can apply for: **non-infrastructure**; **training**; and **infrastructure**. On this line of the application simply check the type(s) of project elements that you are applying for. Do *not* go into detail here as to the actual project you are applying for such as “crosswalks”. You will have the opportunity to do so later in the application. You do not have to apply for all categories -- some applicants may decide to *only* apply for non-infrastructure activities at this time and apply for infrastructure during another project solicitation cycle.

Non-infrastructure Activities include programs and activities to encourage walking and bicycling to school, including:

- Traffic safety education.
- Enforcement efforts such as crossing guard training and safety patrols.
- Encouragement activities for students such as “Walk to School Days” and contests and prizes for walking and mileage clubs.
- Walking School “Buses” and Bike “Trains”.
- Public awareness and outreach campaigns to the press and community leaders.
- Creation of and reproduction of promotional and educational materials.
- Implementation of bicycle and pedestrian safety curricula, materials and trainers and activities such as bike “rodeos” to teach safe bicycling.
- Training, including SRTS training workshops that target school and community level audiences, such the National Workshop Course. (*Check box for SRTS Workshop if requesting this component.*)
- Safety and educational tokens that also advertise the program.
- Photocopying, printing, mailing costs.
- Costs for data gathering, analysis, and evaluation reporting at the local project level.
- Limited planning funds for a consultant to work with the “team” to develop a Safe Routes to School Plan.

Training Course: RI SRTS will be offering the National Training Course in the near future. The one-day workshop is intended to include your “school team” and other stakeholders in your program and would be held at or near your school site. It includes a walking audit and will help you to address concerns with walking conditions at your target school. It will also offer numerous strategies to help in planning and implementing your SRTS program at your school. It will be offered both to successful applicants who are awarded funding for projects as well as applicants who just want to *begin* planning for a SRTS Program and are not yet ready to apply for other activities at this time and therefore, will just be applying for the Training Course. For more information, see:

http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/training/national_course/index.cfm

Please indicate in **II B** if you are interested in holding a workshop.

Infrastructure Activities include the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school. Such projects may be carried out on any public road or any bicycle or pedestrian pathway or trail

in the vicinity of the schools provided that they are in a public right-of-way or on private land covered by a written legal easement providing public access. This includes local roads that are not usually eligible for federal projects. Potential projects from the federal guidelines are listed below. Other types of infrastructure projects that are not in this list may also be eligible if they meet the objectives of reducing speeds and improving pedestrian and bicycle safety and access. This includes engineering expenses, including consultant services associated with developing the project. Because of the limited SRTS funding and the high cost of many infrastructure projects as well as more regulatory involvement, small straightforward projects are strongly encouraged. Only a very limited number of projects that are more involved such as sidewalks will be funded (approximately three to five projects averaging \$300,000). Therefore, more focus should be placed on improvements to existing sidewalks and other safety improvements. Cost estimating guidelines provided by RIDOT are included in the application packet.

- Sidewalk improvements: Including new sidewalks, sidewalk widening, gap closures, sidewalk repairs, and curb ramps. [Due to very high construction cost it is recommended that applicants should limit proposals for “new” sidewalks to distances less than 1000 feet except in unique cases.]
- Traffic calming/speed reduction improvements including bulb-outs, speed humps, raised crossings or intersections, median refuges, narrowed traffic lanes, lane reductions, street closures, automated speed enforcement, and variable speed limits.
- Pedestrian / bicycle crossing improvements including traffic signals and control devices, pavement markings, traffic stripes, flashing beacons, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicle speed feedback signs, pedestrian activated signal upgrades), and sight distance improvements.
- On-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities including new or upgraded bicycle lanes, widened outside lanes or roadway shoulders, geometric improvements, turning lanes, channelization and roadway realignment, traffic signs, and pavement markings.
- Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities including exclusive multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trails and pathways.
- Secure bicycle parking facilities including bicycle parking racks, bicycle lockers, designated areas with safety lighting, and covered bicycle shelters.
- Traffic diversion improvements including separation of pedestrians and bicycles from vehicular traffic adjacent to school facilities, and traffic diversion away from school zones or designated routes to a school.

Again, while eligible, the high cost of some types of infrastructure projects will limit the number of awards; applicants are encouraged to “*think small*” and to consider cost-effectiveness in terms of infrastructure elements they apply for.

C. Target School Name: List the target school of your SRTS program. If the physical site is co-located or very close to each other, two schools can submit one application; both should then be listed.

E. Grades served: List whether the school is an elementary or middle school and include the grades served at the school. Only grades K thru 8 are eligible for the SRTS program.

H. Municipal Application Priority: This refers to the *municipality* project priority. Each city or town in Rhode Island may submit a limited number of applications (see enclosed Project

Submission Limits sheet). A single application may consist of several *program elements* to be implemented at that school, either non-infrastructure and / or infrastructure. That is still considered one application. If more than one application is submitted from a specific city or town, the chief executive of the municipal government *and* the school superintendent must prioritize the applications. Those priorities are just one consideration for selection of a program. The Project Selection Committee is not obligated to choose the municipality's highest priority.

II. DETAILED PROGRAM NARRATIVE MAXIMUM POINTS: 40

This narrative includes your school's SRTS "Plan". The plan should describe the comprehensive approach to be followed in developing and implementing the overall SRTS program for the school, and describe how the proposed project elements and tasks would obtain improvements in the areas of health and safety education, law enforcement, encouragement of walking and biking and infrastructure improvements. Show how it will increase the amount of children walking and bicycling to school. It should include how your school plans to carry out the 5 "E's" which are listed below. These elements are the ingredients of successful SRTS programs throughout the country. A well thought out, detailed program would be awarded more points. The Program Narrative should also include current relevant activities even if you are not requesting funding for those activities – for example, the community may already have a comprehensive enforcement effort. These should still be documented in the Program Narrative, even if funding is not being requested. *If you already tried some activities explain the degree of success and what can be done to improve the activity.*

A request for a one-day workshop as explained earlier or limited funding to help your school team work on a more detailed Safe Routes to School plan can be one of the projects requested; however, the application must still show evidence of team building for the overall program. Include existing and planned efforts to get more kids bicycling and walking at your school using the 5 E's as detailed below. Include obstacles currently limiting walking/biking to school and indicate what can be done to improve this. This may include other reasons in addition to traffic safety. While some obstacles may not be able to be overcome, creative thinking and brainstorming by the team may be able to come to a solution to increase those students walking and biking to school at least some of the time. This document can range from a couple of pages to one with more details. Consider your plan a growing document as you proceed with further planning and implementation of your overall program. Do not be discouraged if your plan does not have all the details for each element. Remember, the National Center for SRTS website can give you plenty of ideas!

Some resources and activities may already be available and even provided at no cost in your community. The activities listed below are just examples, and applicants are not limited to these. Creative ideas are encouraged! If you are not applying for funding for a particular component, describe how you are handling that component. Coordination of the various activities should be demonstrated.

A. General overview: Include a map and pictures as appropriate here and in other questions asked below. You can include a general assessment of the situation and an overview of the solutions. Include diagrams of the areas around the school including bus drop-off and pick-up areas as well as teachers' and parents' cars, etc.

B. Education component: Explain how you plan to fulfill the requirement of an educational component to your school's SRTS Program. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Teaching children about the broad range of transportation choices and the relationship to health and physical activity.
- Instructing children in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills.
- Promotional and educational materials including safety curriculum.
- Parent and community education including launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of the schools.

C. Encouragement component: Explain how you plan to fulfill the requirement of an encouragement component to your school's SRTS Program. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Initiatives to get more children to bicycle and walk to school. This can include incentives for the students, activities such as "bike rodeos", "Walk to School Days", "Walking School Buses", walking clubs with prizes, contests, etc.

D. Enforcement component: Explain how you plan to fulfill the requirement of an enforcement component. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of the schools (this includes enforcement of speeds, yielding to pedestrians in crossing, and proper walking and bicycling behaviors).
- Initiating community enforcement such as crossing guard and safety patrol programs.

E. Engineering component: Describe the physical improvements necessary. Please fill out the engineering data sheet that is in application packet. Refer to the cost estimate sheets included if needed. The degree of detail for the costs for the specific parts of the project including design, construction, etc, will be factored into scoring.

For applicants applying for this component, the rating will be based on the suggested improvements including the following considerations:

- Creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and potential conflicts with motor vehicles, and establish safer and fully accessible crossings, etc.
- Understanding of the steps involved for the permitting process, etc. that is needed for particular projects. If you successful in being awarded an infrastructure project, the project design must be done by a PE from the town or a consultant hired by the town. (Costs will be reimbursed.)
- Consideration of less expensive but effective infrastructure solutions.
- Proposed maintenance plan for improvements if applicable. Indicate who is responsible for operating and/or maintaining the proposed improvements?

For applicants who are not applying for the engineering component at this time it is required that you describe the general infrastructure, safety conditions, etc. Applicants can indicate if they feel they need more planning to determine the kind of improvements needed, if any. As noted earlier in this guide, you can apply for a planning workshop to help with this and perhaps apply for infrastructure changes during another project solicitation cycle. Some applicants may feel they have the basic physical infrastructure but they need the other components to increase the numbers walking and biking to school. Indicate that if it is the case.

F. Evaluation component: Describe how the project will be evaluated.

- Monitor and document outcomes and trends through the collection of data before and after the project including the use of surveys.
- What performance objectives are your proposals designed to meet? These can include increasing number of children walking to school; reducing speeds in the school zone, etc.
- How will success be measured?

IV. CORRECTION OF SAFETY HAZARDS MAXIMUM POINTS: 30

Remember the major goals of the SRTS Program are to increase the number of children walking and biking to school and to make it safer for this to occur.

A. Project area overview / characteristics that affect safety for walkers: This section should include general land use characteristics and general conditions in the vicinity of the school, roadway traffic volumes and speeds, roadway functional classification, presence of sidewalks and bike lanes, number of current walkers, number of children dropped off, conflicts created by parent drop-offs and bus traffic, presence of crossing guards, land uses surrounding the school, etc. The lack of sidewalks throughout the walking area does not automatically exclude an area although sidewalks would, of course, be preferable. It is up to the school team to decide whether due to overall traffic conditions, children can safely walk to school with improvements and initiatives such as walking school buses, traffic education, etc. Identification by the team of current and potential safe walking and bicycle routes to school can be included, if available. Maps and photographs should be included when applicable.

B. Severity of safety concerns: This should include the number and severity of pedestrian injuries and/or fatalities in the project area; other crash data; parent and/or police surveys or interviews regarding safety conditions, etc. (refer to Engineering Data sheet in Application Packet). Identify known safety hazards or obstacles and any other barriers to walking and biking safely to school. The enclosed Walkability Checklist is helpful in conducting a walkability audit around your school. Inside the survey packet is a listing of helpful resources. Whether or not there have been actual accidents, a potentially unsafe condition can still exist. If so, please describe. This is a section where input from the law enforcement members of your team can be valuable. Describe other safety issues, such as why parents do not have their children walk to school. Address real and perceived dangers, and include crime statistics when applicable.

NOTE: In some cases, the present walking conditions are so hazardous that your planning team may not wish to encourage more children to walk to school at this time. If you have unsafe conditions that must be corrected first, you can still apply for funding for education and enforcement activities in addition to the engineering (infrastructure) improvements requested. Please be sure to describe and document the unsafe conditions above. If this is the case then please include the following statement:

Children should not be encouraged to walk to school until improvements have been made.

C. Anticipated safety benefits: This should include the reduction of vehicular / pedestrian conflicts, slowing vehicular traffic, improving driver awareness, creating vertical or horizontal

separation between walkers/bikers and vehicular traffic, and/or crossing guards. When including recommendations to correct the safety hazards, show *how* these improvements will correct the problems. Be creative and realize funding is limited; do not overlook small steps that can be taken such as creating an opening in a fence or shrub to allow children to walk on a path safely.

V. POTENTIAL FOR SUCCESS MAXIMUM POINTS: 20

A. Eligible vs. actual walkers: Please estimate the number of children who are anticipated to benefit from the program. Statistics may be obtained from the school directly as to numbers of those students actually walking as well as those who live a certain distance, e.g. ½ mile, ¾ mile, 1 mile, etc. and are eligible for busing. A Student Tally and Parent Survey form is in the Application Packet. It is also on the National Center for SRTS web site. The survey form provided is a tool that may be used now to help determine the number of students actually walking to your school but must be used by the schools awarded funding as part of the “before” and “after” evaluation. Many schools have developed innovative methods to have their students participate in the charting of the results that can be part of the educational curriculum. For purposes of this application, the survey is optional as long as estimates of children walking are provided. If used, do not send copies of the filled out surveys; send the summary of the results obtained.

B. Community and school support/list of “champion(s)” and school “team”: Successful SRTS programs have had a “local champion” who has the initiative to get people involved and excited in the planning of the program. The champion can be a parent, school staff person, parent-teacher organization, school or town administrator, town planner, school committee member, or any one person or small group who takes responsibility for organizing the program team and guides the overall school program. Names and positions should be listed here if possible. This person does not have to be the one who actually writes the application. If it is a group such as the parent-teacher organization, name(s) should be listed of the champion or two or three individuals who will take charge.

An existing health or wellness team, etc. can form the nucleus if applicable. Representatives of the SRTS Team could include:

- From the school side: the principal, parents, teachers, students, school nurse, administrators, member from the school district’s “wellness” team, and the “school resource” person.
- From the municipal government side: public works director, engineer, planner, law enforcement, highway superintendent, and fire department.
- From the community side: local businesses, particularly those in the vicinity of the school, and community or non-profit groups.

List the names and positions of the members of your school “team”. Document any meetings that have been held with your team. The **principal of the school** and a **law enforcement representative from the city/town** are **required** to be a member of your team. If you are applying for infrastructure, then a **public works (or engineer) representative from the city/town** is **required**. The municipal officials would be responsible for the feasibility, requirements and permits, and estimated costs of infrastructure projects. Also include who will manage the program so the benefits and programs gained will continue after the parent volunteers move on when their children graduate from your school.

Not all applicants will have the full team selected at this time. Evidence of progress in this would be reflected in the scoring. The applicant can include plans as to how they will increase the number of partners/ team members involved in the program and, of course, this would be ongoing. *It is most essential to have the cooperation and enthusiasm of the school principal, teachers, and the parents at the school proposed for the program. Many times parent teacher groups are a good way of communicating and gaining enthusiasm from the parents. Cooperation and enthusiasm from parents is essential for the success of the program.*

Cooperation with other schools for certain programs, etc. can help further chances for success. The applicant can also show the relationship with other relevant programs such as the RI Department of Health's "Initiative for a Healthy Weight" or the "Healthy Kids! Healthy Schools!" initiative led by the Departments of Health and Education. The SRTS program is included in the Department of Health's initiative as a means to help achieve their goals. Letters of commitment and support, if available, can be included but are not required.

VII. PREVIOUS PLANNING ACTIVITIES MAXIMUM OF 10 BONUS POINTS

A. SRTS activities currently underway: Describe relevant school activities even if they are not part of a formal SRTS program. These can include Walk to School Days, walking clubs, etc. Include any relevant school health and wellness programs.

B. School Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic Safety Plan: Reference to this is in the "Rules and Regulations for School Health Programs" (R16-21-SCHO) currently on page 56 of the document, Section 41.0 "Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic Safety" that was completed by your school. Describe briefly and attach the relevant section of your school's safety plan.

VII. OTHER FACTORS MAXIMUM OF 10 BONUS POINTS

A. Companion initiatives within the school facility/vicinity: This can include either existing or planned infrastructure projects or non-infrastructure activities. Describe how they could potentially further SRTS goals and implementation. They may include CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization, library projects, recreational facilities, bike paths already under construction or completed, etc. SRTS funding that you are applying for should not be used to replace existing funding for existing projects.

B. Economically disadvantaged school populations: Include percentage and numbers of students in your school eligible for free or reduced-cost school meals.

C. Located within growth center/urban service boundary: Is the school in a designated downtown or village center? Describe how this can potentially add to the success of the program. Your town planner can assist with this section.

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS: 110

VIII. PROPOSED PROJECT BUDGET

List *only* the project tasks that you are requesting funds for, not all the elements of your program. Include detail for estimated costs. For infrastructure projects include estimates for the specific

parts of the project including design, permitting, right of way acquisition, construction, etc. For non-infrastructure projects, list estimated costs.

Funding available and project cost limits: A maximum of \$2.2 million will be available for both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects for this first funding cycle, subject to authorization by RIDOT. The project selection committee has discretion to not award all the funding in this grant cycle. Funding can be carried over to the next cycle if necessary. For the full multi-year funding period, 70% - 90% of the apportioned funds will be awarded for infrastructure projects. 10% - 30% will be awarded for non-infrastructure projects. The Safe Routes to School Program is 100% federally funded. No matching funds are required.

Other requirements for Safe Routes to School Projects: SRTS projects are subject to all requirements of Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations. SRTS infrastructure projects and non-infrastructure activities need to comply with all applicable provisions, such as project agreements, authorization to proceed prior to incurring costs, compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), etc. In addition, infrastructure projects must comply with Davis Bacon prevailing wage rates, competitive bidding procedures, and other contracting requirements, etc. even for projects not located within the right-of-way of a federal aid highway, i.e. the project is on a local road. Most SRTS projects will likely fall under the categorical exclusions provisions of Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations Section 771.117 that recognize construction of bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths, and facilities as not involving significant environmental impacts, however environmental review documentation may be required. Projects must also comply with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicants are also responsible for obtaining any and all permits relevant to their project. **Please work with your appropriate partners to determine compliance with these and any other necessary provisions for your projects.**

Once the project is awarded, a Project Agreement must be executed and signed prior to proceeding with any work. This Agreement will enumerate project requirements such as evaluation and reporting requirements, documentation required for reimbursement, etc.

X. DESIGNATED FISCAL AGENT

The municipality and school district must decide on the fiscal agent for both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects and indicate this on the application. A non-profit applicant must have a designated municipality or school district as a fiscal agent for the project. (Rare exceptions may be granted.) Infrastructure projects must have the municipality as the fiscal agent. Non-infrastructure programs can designate the school, school district, or municipality as the fiscal agent. If a clear and strong need exists for more than one fiscal agent for different components of the project, please attach an explanation. Designation of fiscal agent will be finalized in the Project Agreement.

XI. APPLICATION SIGNATURES

All signatories indicate an agreement in principle and a partnership on this program. Applications lacking all three signatures (Chief Municipal Executive, School Superintendent, and School Principal) will be returned.